MARVEL
KNIGHTS
#3
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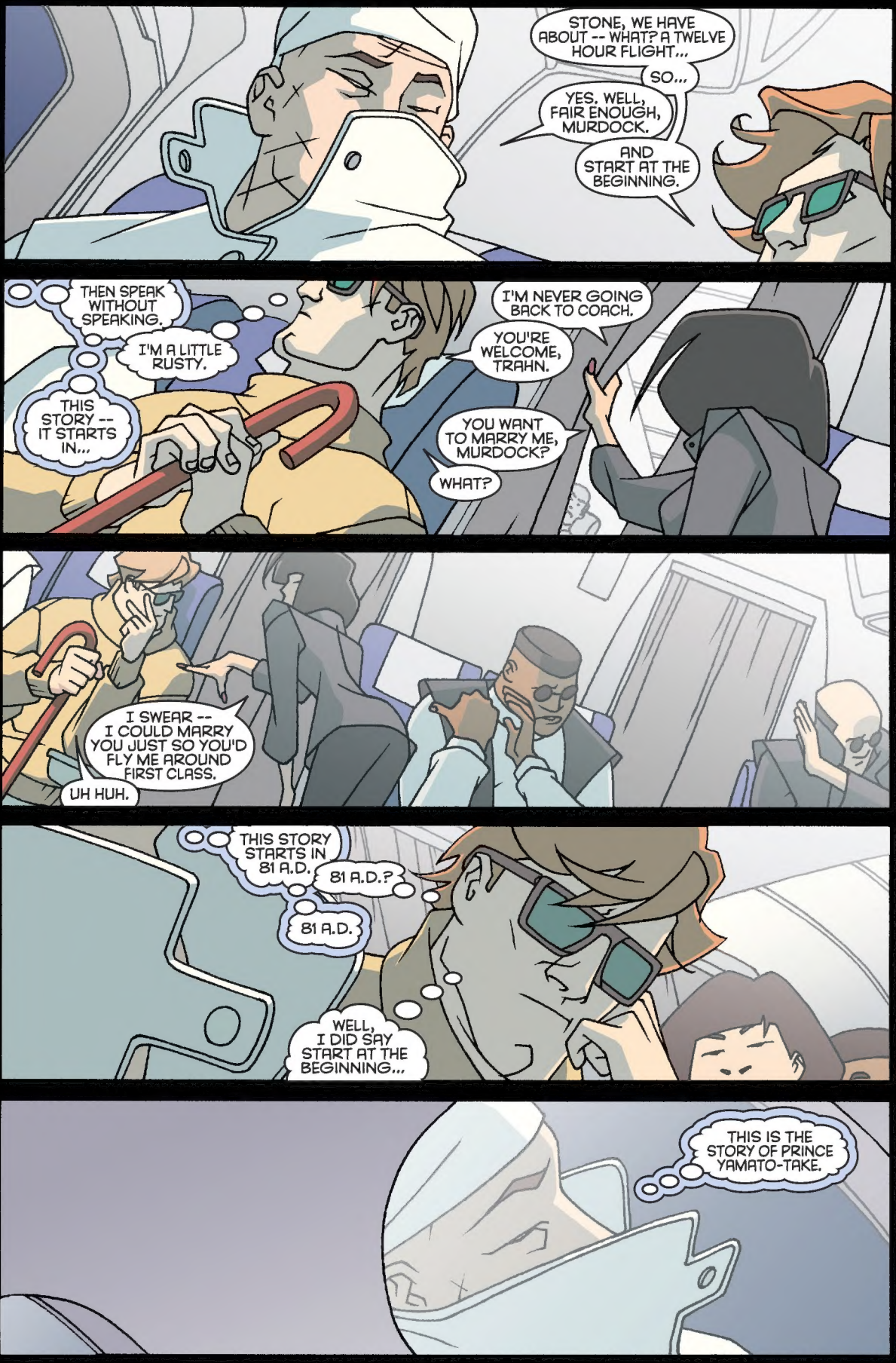
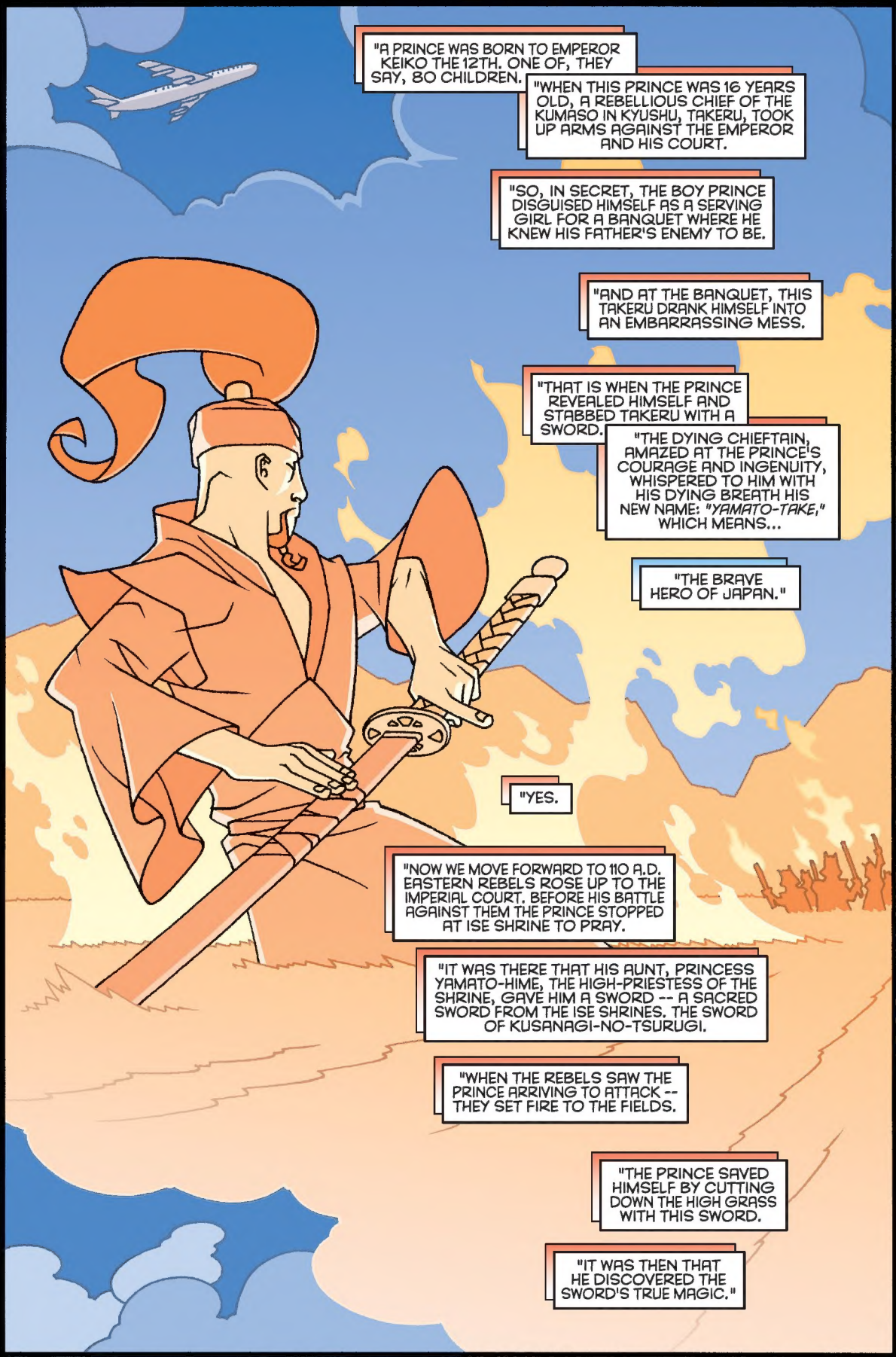
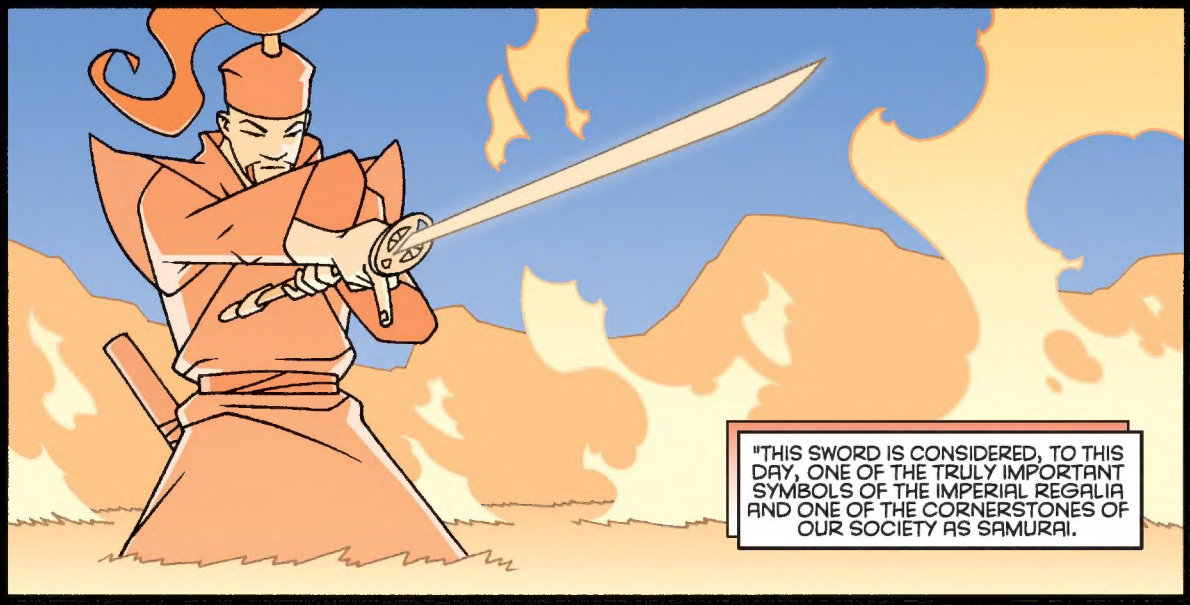
BENDIS
HAYNES
DAREDEVIL
NINJA
MARVEL


STONE, WE HAVE ABOUT -- WHAT? A TWELVE HOUR FLIGHT...
SO...
YES, WELL, FAIR ENOUGH, MURDOCK.
AND START AT THE BEGINNING.
THEN SPEAK WITHOUT SPEAKING.
I'M A LITTLE RUSTY.
THIS STORY -- IT STARTS IN...
I'M NEVER GOING BACK TO COACH.
YOU'RE WELCOME, TRAHN.
YOU WANT TO MARRY ME, MURDOCK?
WHAT?
I SWEAR -- I COULD MARRY YOU JUST SO YOU'D FLY ME AROUND FIRST CLASS.
UH HUH.
THIS STORY STARTS IN 81 A.D.
81 A.D.?
81 A.D.
WELL, I DID SAY START AT THE BEGINNING...
THIS IS THE STORY OF PRINCE YAMATO-TAKE.


"A PRINCE WAS BORN TO EMPEROR KEIKO THE 12TH. ONE OF, THEY SAY, 80 CHILDREN.
"WHEN THIS PRINCE WAS 16 YEARS OLD, A REBELLIOUS CHIEF OF THE KUMASO IN KYUSHU, TAKERU, TOOK UP ARMS AGAINST THE EMPEROR AND HIS COURT.
"SO, IN SECRET, THE BOY PRINCE DISGUISED HIMSELF AS A SERVING GIRL FOR A BANQUET WHERE HE KNEW HIS FATHER'S ENEMY TO BE.
"AND AT THE BANQUET, THIS TAKERU DRANK HIMSELF INTO AN EMBARRASSING MESS.
"THAT IS WHEN THE PRINCE REVEALED HIMSELF AND STABBED TAKERU WITH A SWORD.
"THE DYING CHIEFTAIN, AMAZED AT THE PRINCE'S COURAGE AND INGENUITY, WHISPERED TO HIM WITH HIS DYING BREATH HIS NEW NAME: *"YAMATO-TAKE,"* WHICH MEANS...
"THE BRAVE HERO OF JAPAN."
"YES.
"NOW WE MOVE FORWARD TO 110 A.D. EASTERN REBELS ROSE UP TO THE IMPERIAL COURT. BEFORE HIS BATTLE AGAINST THEM THE PRINCE STOPPED AT ISE SHRINE TO PRAY.
"IT WAS THERE THAT HIS AUNT, PRINCESS YAMATO-HIME, THE HIGH-PRIESTESS OF THE SHRINE, GAVE HIM A SWORD -- A SACRED SWORD FROM THE ISE SHRINES. THE SWORD OF KUSANAGI-NO-TSURUGI.
"WHEN THE REBELS SAW THE PRINCE ARRIVING TO ATTACK -- THEY SET FIRE TO THE FIELDS.
"THE PRINCE SAVED HIMSELF BY CUTTING DOWN THE HIGH GRASS WITH THIS SWORD.
"IT WAS THEN THAT HE DISCOVERED THE SWORD'S TRUE MAGIC."


"THIS SWORD IS CONSIDERED, TO THIS DAY, ONE OF THE TRULY IMPORTANT SYMBOLS OF THE IMPERIAL REGALIA AND ONE OF THE CORNERSTONES OF OUR SOCIETY AS SAMURAI.

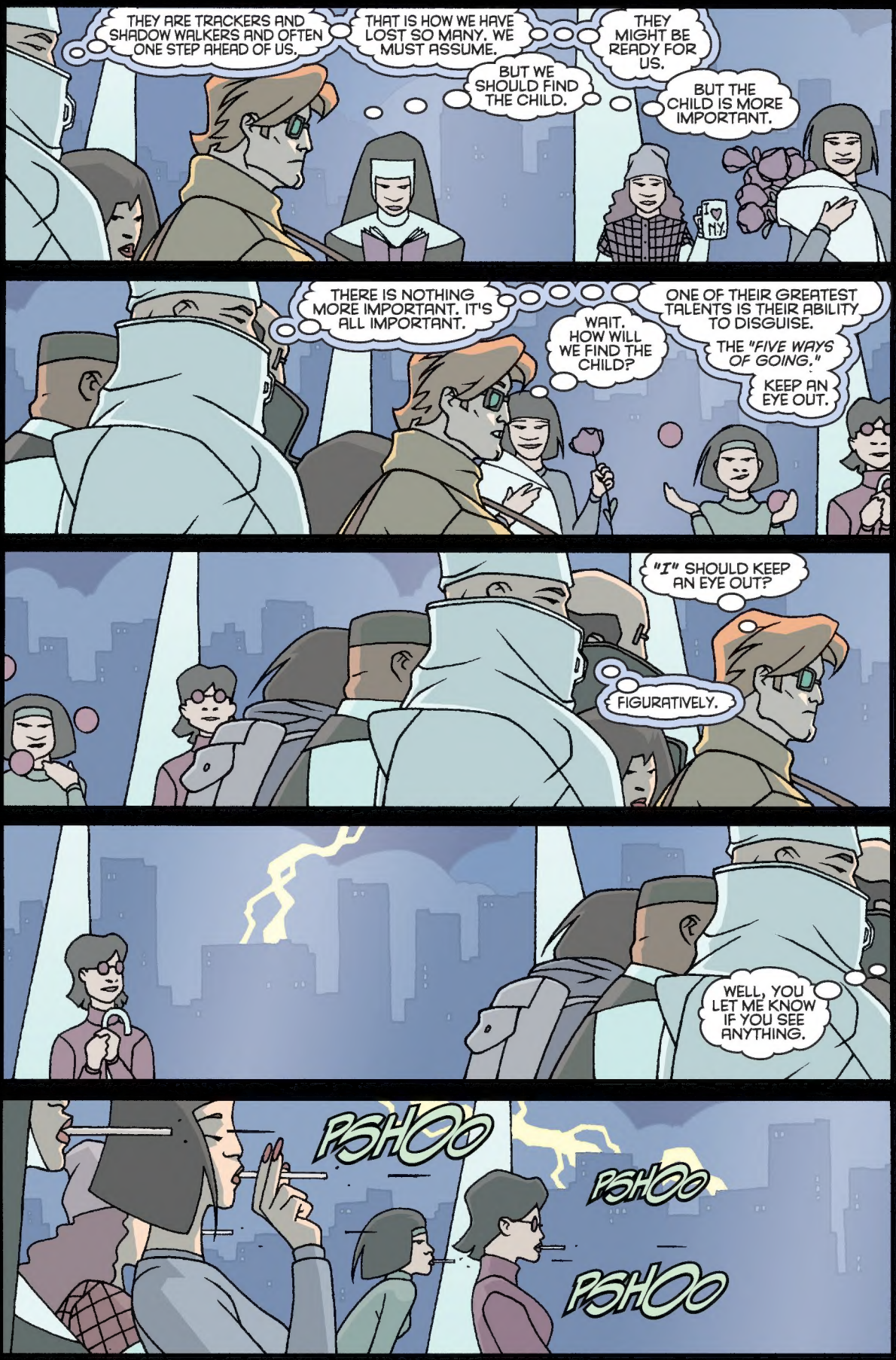
"THE SWORD, UNTIL RECENTLY, WAS ENSHRINED IN A SHINTO SHRINE AT ATSUTA NEAR NAGOYA, IN THE OWARI PROVINCE.
"THEY SAY ONCE A KOREAN BUDDHIST STOLE 'THE GRASSCUTTER' AND TRIED TO TAKE IT TO HIS HOMELAND.
"THE GODS WOULD NOT HAVE IT. THE WIND AND RAIN GODS FORCED THE MONK TO TURN BACK.

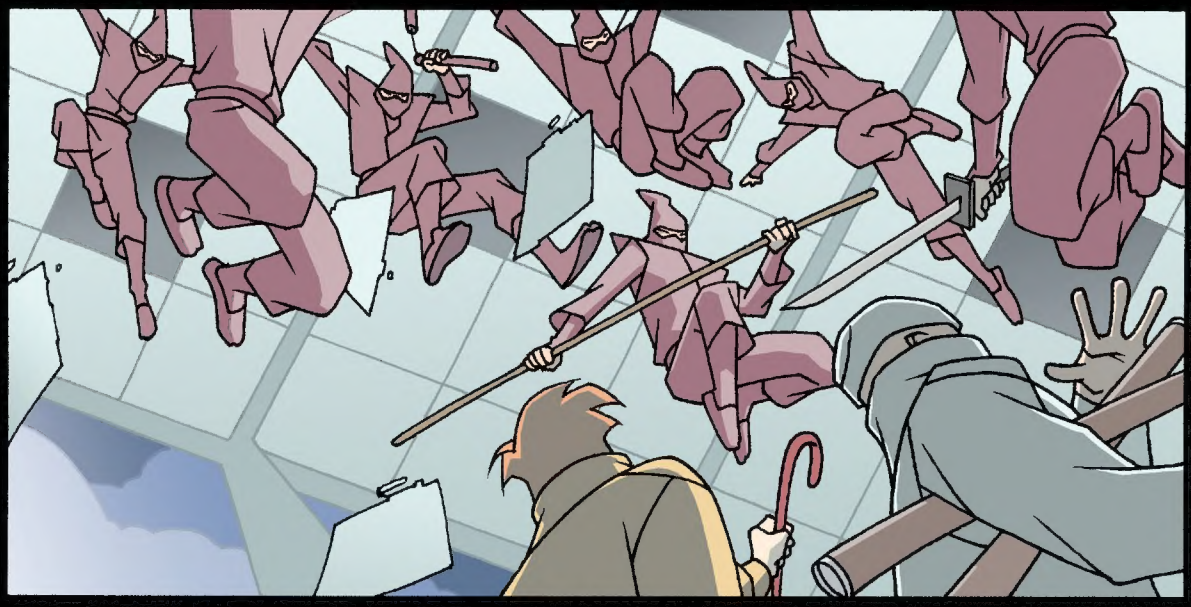
"BUT IT SEEMS THAT EVEN THE GODS CAN BE TRICKED --
"-- BECAUSE NOW THE SWORD HAS YET AGAIN BEEN STOLEN."

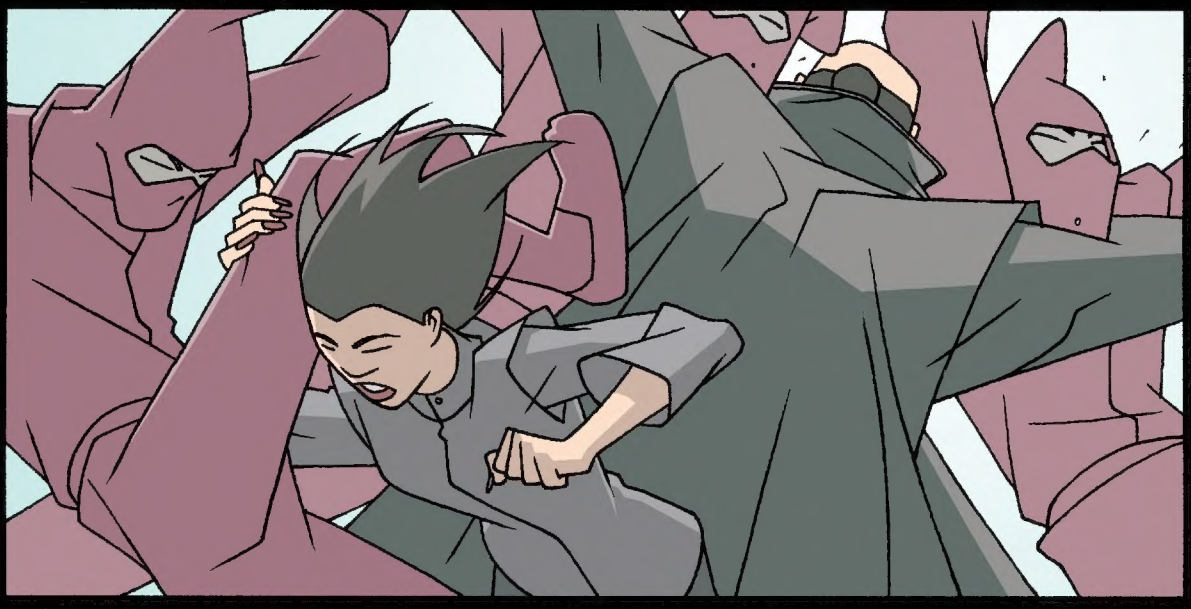
THE HAND?
WE BELIEVE.
WHY? I MEAN -- WHY WOULD A NINJA OUTFIT FOR HIRE...?
BECAUSE, OBVIOUSLY, THEY EITHER HAVE OR THINK THEY HAVE DISCOVERED "THE NEXT ONE."
"THE NEXT ONE" WHAT?
THE NEXT REINCARNATED SOUL OF --
"...THE BRAVE HERO OF JAPAN."
YOU CAN IMAGINE THE POWER ONE WOULD HOLD OVER OUR PART OF THE WORLD -- THE POWER OF THE ONE WHO RETURNS THE SACRED SWORD TO ITS RIGHTFUL OWNER.
BUT THE HAND ARE NINJA. BY DEFINITION THEY ARE JUST A SECRET SOCIETY. NOT PART OF OUR --
YES. AND WHY IS THAT, DO YOU THINK?
CONTROL OVER THE WARRIOR SOUL OF YAMATO TAKE IS WHAT THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE SEVEN AND THE HAND HAS ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT. IT IS WHAT KEPT THE FIGHT OURS. WHY, NO MATTER HOW OUT-NUMBERED OR OVERPOWERED, WE ALWAYS HAD THE UPPER HAND.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

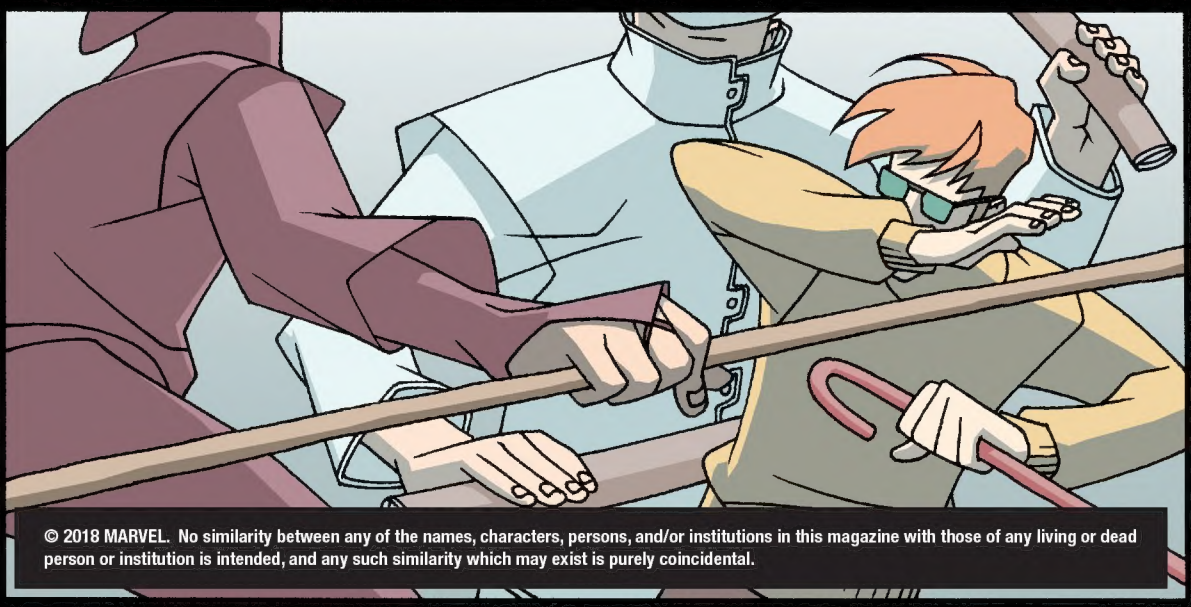
WE MUST FIND THIS CHILD IF THEY HAVE NOT ALREADY.
HOW DO WE KNOW IT IS A CHILD?
BECAUSE WE KNEW THE IDENTITY OF THE LAST ONE -- THE LAST REINCARNATION OF THE SOUL-- AND HE -- HE IS NOW DEAD.
WHO WAS IT?
OUR SENSEI.
WAIT, BUT I NEVER SAW STICK WITH A SWORD OF ANY KIND, LET ALONE ONE THAT --
THE STICK SYMBOLIZED HIS FEELINGS ABOUT HIS PLACE IN THINGS. HE EVEN TOOK ITS NAME. HE USED A WEAPON OF SIMPLICITY AND ONE THAT WAS BORN FROM THE EARTH. NOT MAN-MADE, HE SAID. FROM THE EARTH.
BUT OUR SENSEI IS GONE. ANOTHER HAS TAKEN HIS PLACE.
ANOTHER...
IF THEY HAVE BOTH THE SWORD AND THE ONE WHO BEARS THE SOUL OF THE PRINCE...

I DIDN'T KNOW ANY OF THIS. I NEVER KNEW THE FIGHT BETWEEN THE HAND AND THE SEVEN WENT SO --
NOT MANY DO.
I ASSURE YOU THAT MOST OF THE HAND DOESN'T EVEN KNOW THE REASONS WE FIGHT. THEY THINK IT IS JUST VENDETTAS AND BLOOD HONOR. YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER, MOST OF THE HAND DOESN'T EVEN KNOW THE IDENTITY OF THEIR CLAN MASTER -- THEIR JONIN.
DO YOU?
NO. IF I DID, THIS WOULD BE OVER.
SOMETIMES -- SOMETIMES IN BATTLE, WHEN THE ADRENALINE IS GOING -- I HEAR THE MASTER'S VOICE IN MY HEAD.
YES, RESIDUE FROM 'SPEAKING WITHOUT WORDS,' AS WE DO NOW.
IT'S QUITE ANNOYING.
I ACTUALLY FIND IT COMFORTING.
YOU WOULD.
LEFT
AND THE NEXT MOVE -- FIND THE CHILD?
OR FIND THE HAND BEFORE THEY FIND US.


THEY ARE TRACKERS AND SHADOW WALKERS AND OFTEN ONE STEP AHEAD OF US.
THAT IS HOW WE HAVE LOST SO MANY. WE MUST ASSUME.
BUT WE SHOULD FIND THE CHILD.
THEY MIGHT BE READY FOR US.
BUT THE CHILD IS MORE IMPORTANT.
I ♥ NY
THERE IS NOTHING MORE IMPORTANT. IT'S ALL IMPORTANT.
WAIT. HOW WILL WE FIND THE CHILD?
ONE OF THEIR GREATEST TALENTS IS THEIR ABILITY TO DISGUISE.
THE "FIVE WAYS OF GOING."
KEEP AN EYE OUT.
"I" SHOULD KEEP AN EYE OUT?
FIGURATIVELY.
WELL, YOU LET ME KNOW IF YOU SEE ANYTHING.
PSHOO
PSHOO
PSHOO







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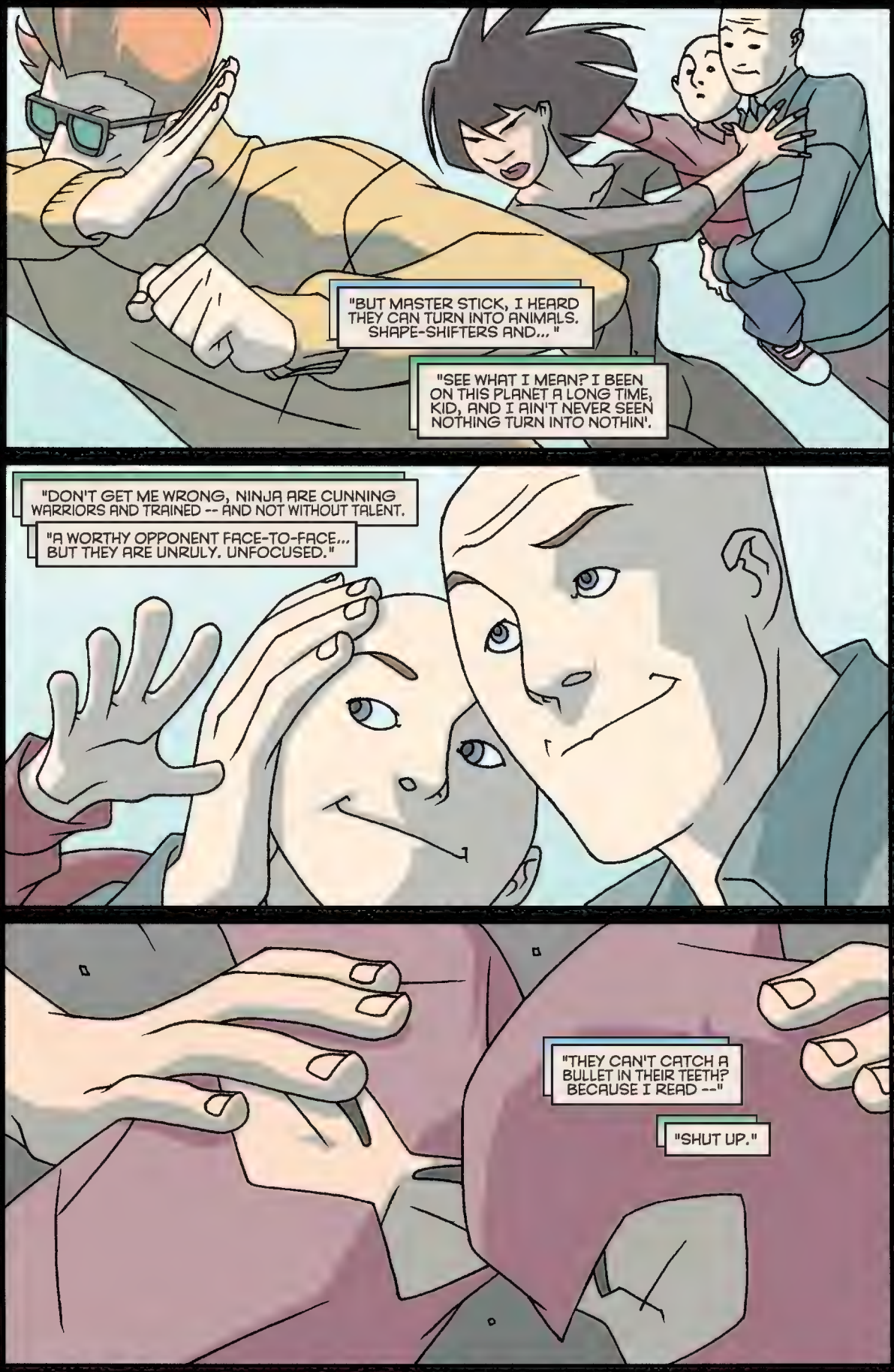
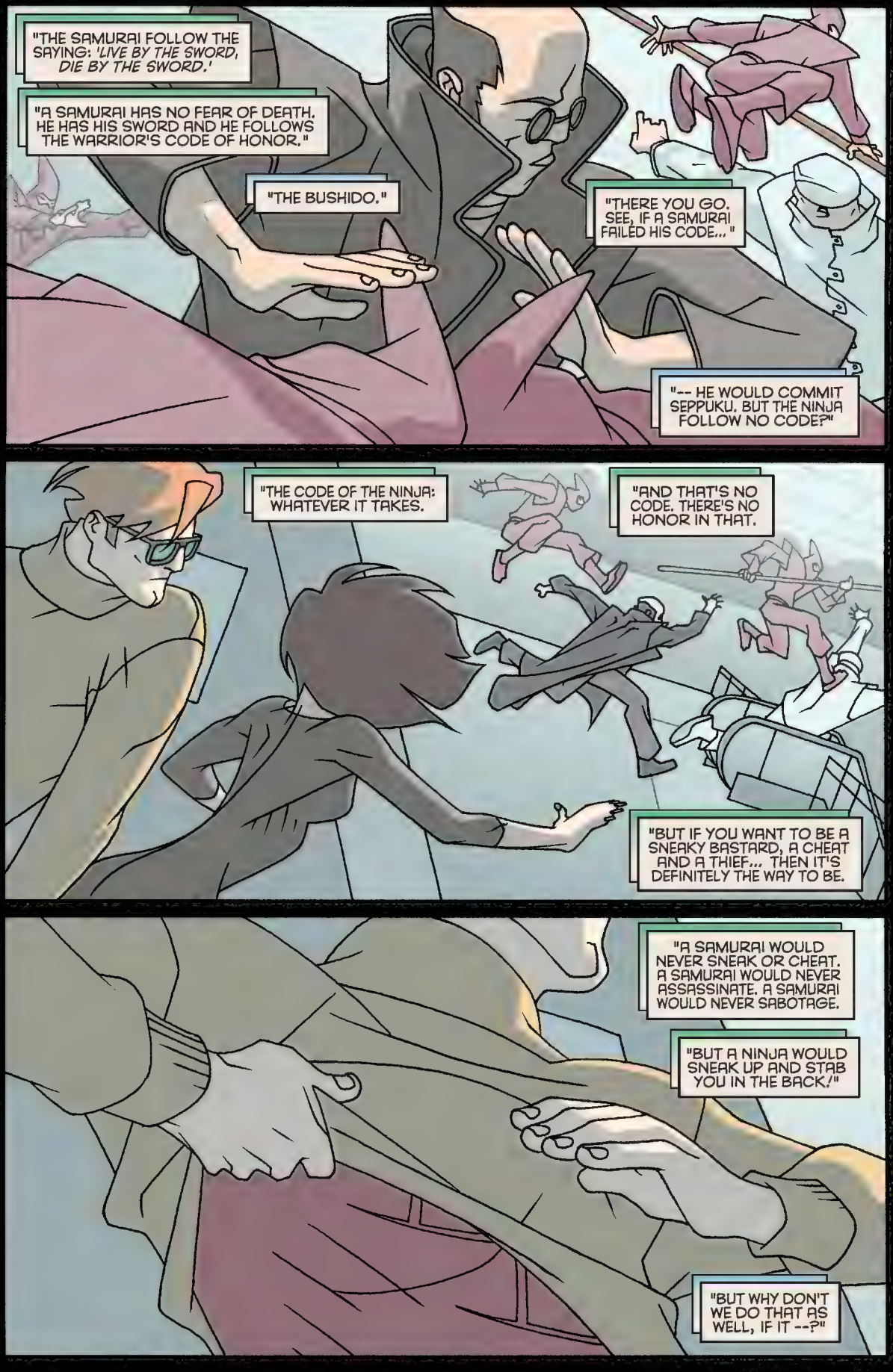
STONE, I CAN'T HAVE THIS.
I CAN'T HAVE BLIND LAWYER MATT MURDOCK FIGHTING AN ALL-OUT NINJA WAR IN THE MIDDLE OF LAGUARDIA.
SORT OF DEFEATS THE POINT OF A SECRET IDENTITY FOR BEING DAREDEVIL.
"WELL, OFFICER, I WAS HIT IN THE FACE BY SOME RADIOACTIVE ISOTOPE WHEN I WAS A KID...
"... AND EVEN THOUGH IT BLINDED ME FOR LIFE, IT ENHANCED THE REST OF MY SENSES TO SUPERHUMAN LEVELS. CAN WE JUST KEEP IT BETWEEN US?"
I CAN'T DO THIS HERE.
DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO.
I WASN'T ASKING.

HIM! AFTER HIM!
"SENSEI STICK?"
"WHAT, MURDOCK?"
"WHERE DID THE NINJAS COME FROM? I MEAN -- WHERE DID IT ALL START?"
"WHAT AM I? YOUR $#%!!IN' HISTORY PROFESSOR? READ A BOOK."
"I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND THE --"
"GOD! DON'T WHINE -- LISTEN AND LEARN...
"BACK IN THE OLD DAYS..."
"WHEN?"
"I DON'T KNOW, BEFORE ELECTRICITY, OKAY?
"BACK IN THE OLD DAYS THESE PRIVILEGED FAMILIES -- RICH FAMILIES ROSE UP IN POWER.
OOF!
MY BABBBYYY!
"THEY STARTED FIGHTING AMONGST EACH OTHER FOR CONTROL OF JAPAN."

"AND THESE WERE DIRTY FIGHTS, KIDDO.
"BACKSTABBING AARON SPELLING MELROSE PLACE KIND OF $@%#.
"AND WHEN YOU FIGHT DIRTY -- YOU NEED DIRTY FIGHTERS. SPIES AND ASSASSINS.
"SPECIALITY WARRIORS TO FIGHT FOR THEM IN SECRET. YA WITH ME?"
"I'M WITH YOU, BUT... "
"SO PRACTITIONERS OF THESE KIND OF SHADOW WARRIOR ARTS CAME IN GREAT DEMAND AND...
"SO, TA DAA... THE GODDAMN NINJA WAS BORN."

"AND AS THESE NINJAS GAINED IN POPULARITY SO DID THE STORIES...
"OOH YEAH, THESE BIG STORIES OF SUPER NINJA POWERS AND ABILITIES BEYOND THOSE OF MORTAL MEN.
"AND THE NINJA ACTUALLY ENCOURAGED THIS DEVIOUS KINDA P.R. BECAUSE IN REALITY THEY KNEW THEY WERE NOTHING COMPARED TO THE MIGHTY SAMURAI.
"SEE, THE SAMURAI -- NOW THEY ARE SUPERIOR WARRIORS TO NINJA IN EVERY WAY. TRAINED, PRECISE. HONORABLE.
"BUT THESE SILLY OVER-THE-TOP STORIES WORKED FOR THE NINJA.
"STILL DO."

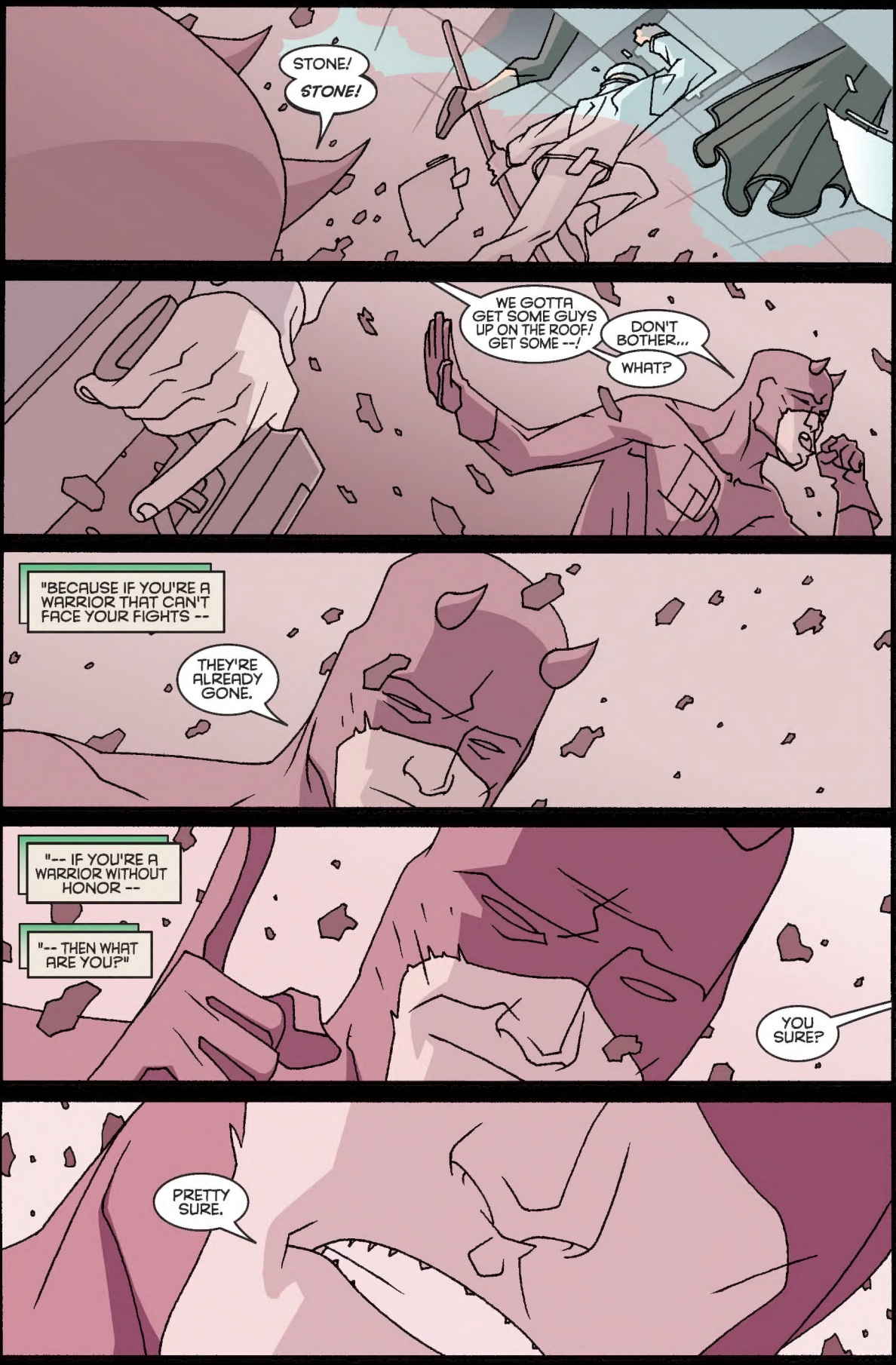

"BUT MASTER STICK, I HEARD THEY CAN TURN INTO ANIMALS. SHAPE-SHIFTERS AND... "
"SEE WHAT I MEAN? I BEEN ON THIS PLANET A LONG TIME, KID, AND I AIN'T NEVER SEEN NOTHING TURN INTO NOTHIN'.
"DON'T GET ME WRONG, NINJA ARE CUNNING WARRIORS AND TRAINED -- AND NOT WITHOUT TALENT.
"A WORTHY OPPONENT FACE-TO-FACE... BUT THEY ARE UNRULY. UNFOCUSED."
"THEY CAN'T CATCH A BULLET IN THEIR TEETH? BECAUSE I READ --"
"SHUT UP."

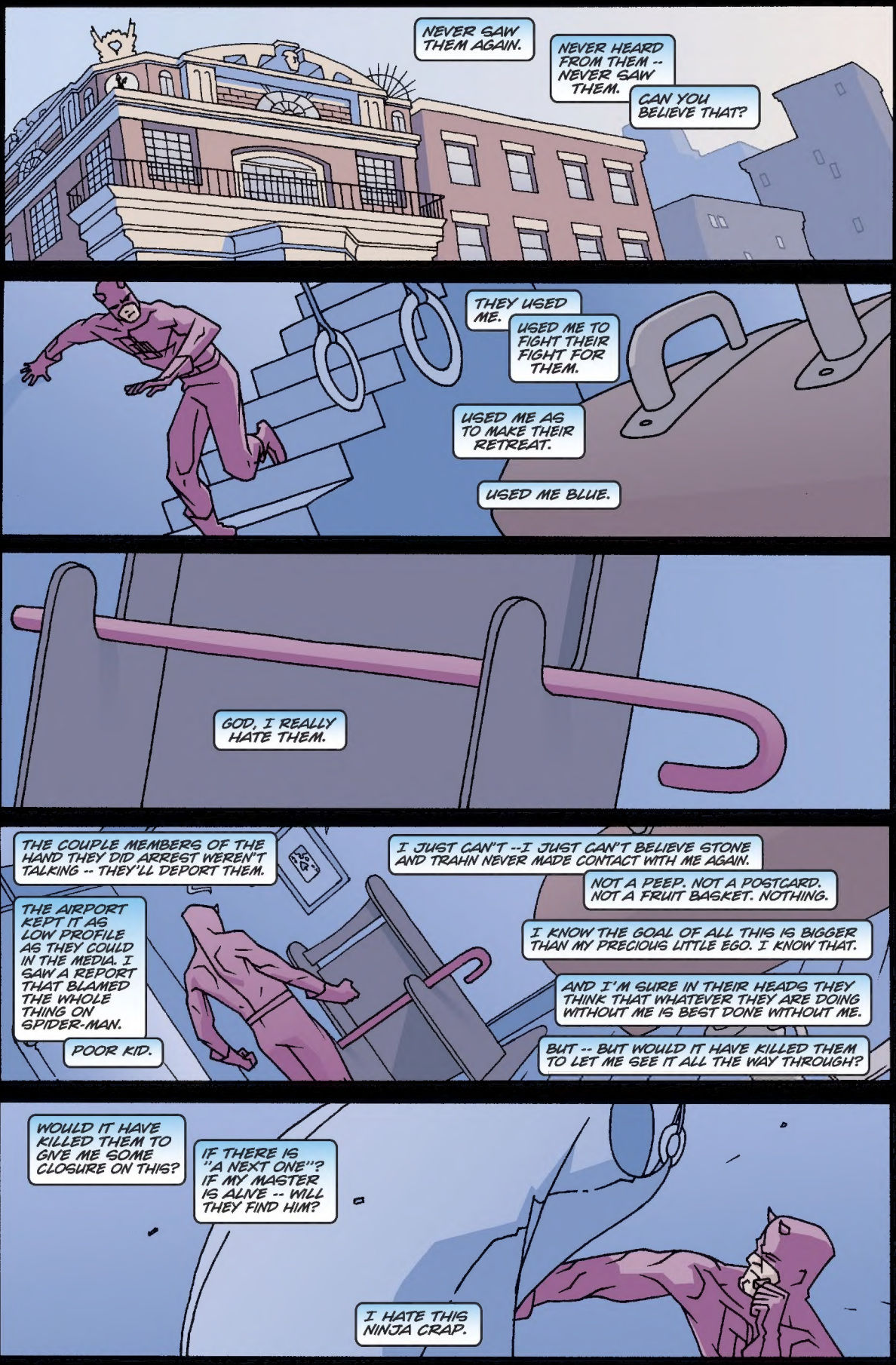

"THE SAMURAI FOLLOW THE SAYING: 'LIVE BY THE SWORD, DIE BY THE SWORD.'
"A SAMURAI HAS NO FEAR OF DEATH. HE HAS HIS SWORD AND HE FOLLOWS THE WARRIOR'S CODE OF HONOR."
"THE BUSHIDO."
"THERE YOU GO. SEE, IF A SAMURAI FAILED HIS CODE..."
"-- HE WOULD COMMIT SEPPUKU. BUT THE NINJA FOLLOW NO CODE?"
"THE CODE OF THE NINJA: WHATEVER IT TAKES.
"AND THAT'S NO CODE. THERE'S NO HONOR IN THAT.
"BUT IF YOU WANT TO BE A SNEAKY BASTARD, A CHEAT AND A THIEF... THEN IT'S DEFINITELY THE WAY TO BE.
"A SAMURAI WOULD NEVER SNEAK OR CHEAT. A SAMURAI WOULD NEVER ASSASSINATE. A SAMURAI WOULD NEVER SABOTAGE.
"BUT A NINJA WOULD SNEAK UP AND STAB YOU IN THE BACK!"
"BUT WHY DON'T WE DO THAT AS WELL, IF IT --?"

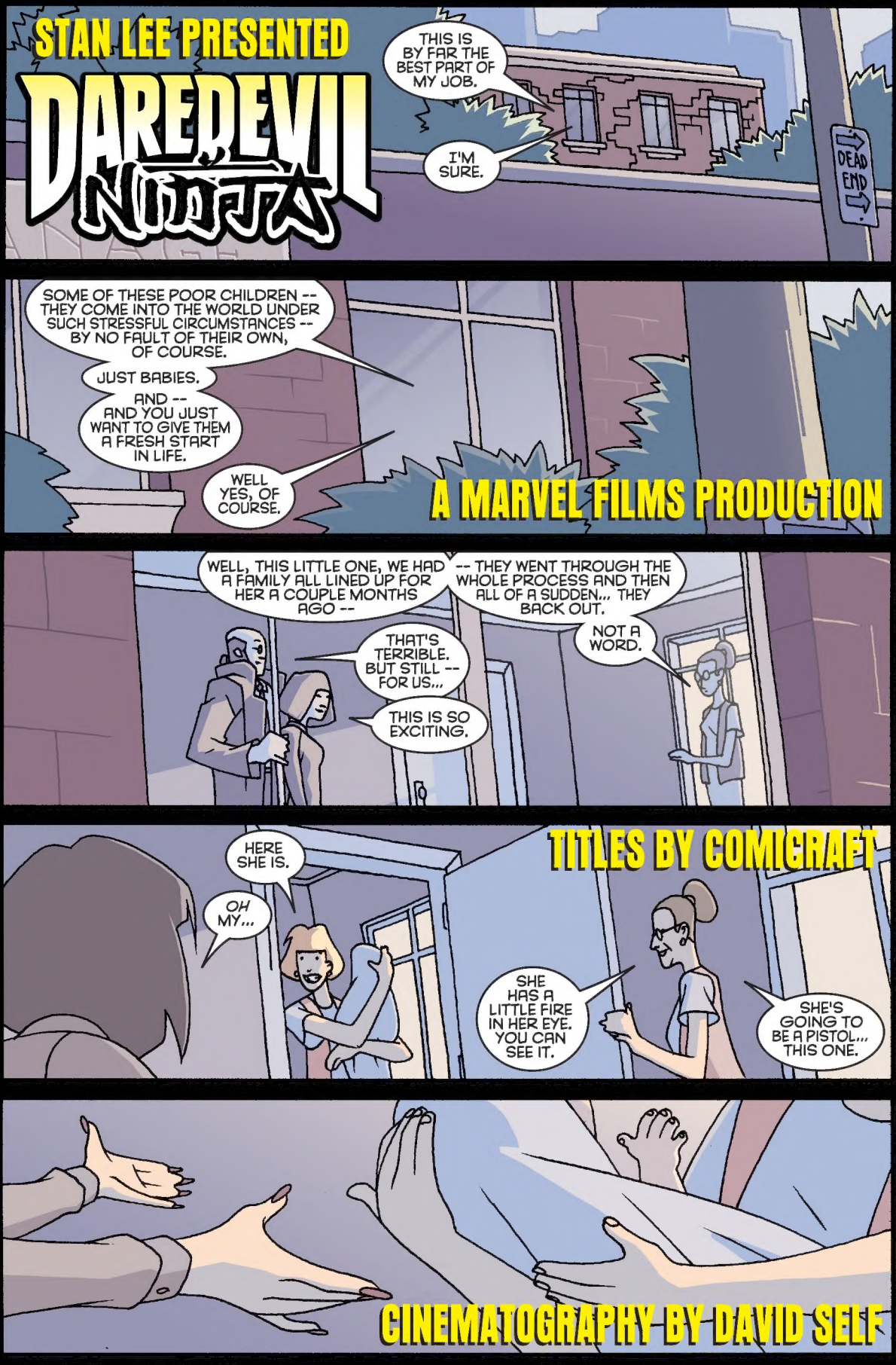
"MURDOCK, IF YOU TAKE ANYTHING AWAY FROM OUR TIME TOGETHER, TAKE THIS:
"LIFE IS FULL OF CONFLICTS.
"FIGHTS WILL COME AT YOU FROM EVERY DIRECTION AND FOR WHATEVER REASON."

"WHAT'S TRULY IMPORTANT IS HOW YOU FIGHT THESE FIGHTS.
"AND THE SAMURAI WAY IS TO FIGHT WITH HONOR. TO FACE THE FIGHT HEAD ON."

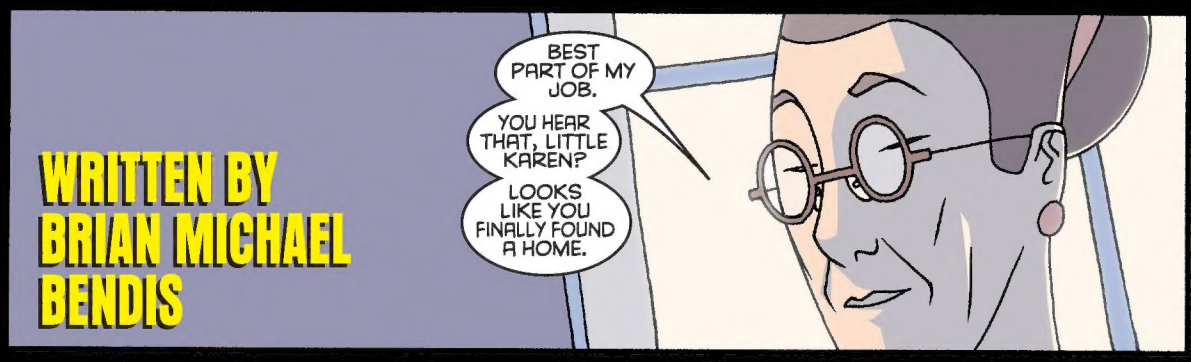
"BECAUSE IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOU WIN. IT MATTERS HOW YOU WIN.
DROP YOUR WEAPONS! HANDS IN THE AIR!
DROP THE SWORD. WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?
OFFICERS, DON'T -- IT'S TOO DANGEROUS.
"YOU DON'T RUN AWAY -- YOU FACE YOUR FIGHTS LIKE A WARRIOR."
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
OH MY GOD!

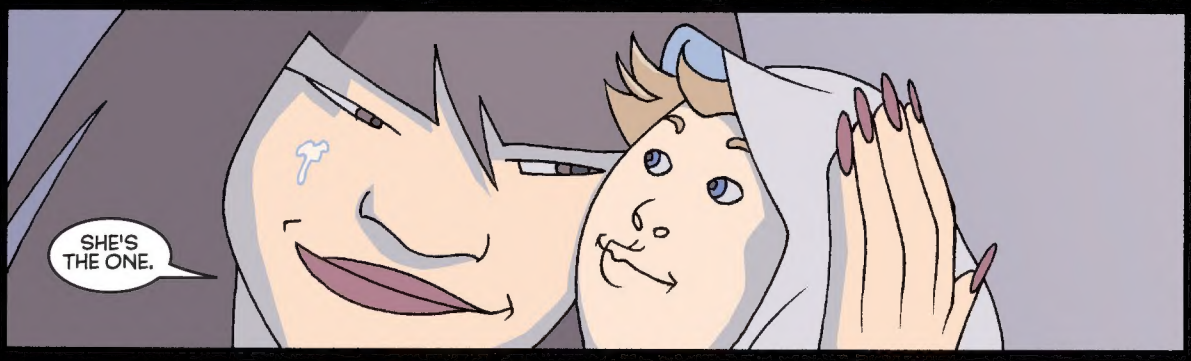

STONE!
STONE!
WE GOTTA GET SOME GUYS UP ON THE ROOF! GET SOME --!
DON'T BOTHER...
WHAT?
"BECAUSE IF YOU'RE A WARRIOR THAT CAN'T FACE YOUR FIGHTS --
THEY'RE ALREADY GONE.
"-- IF YOU'RE A WARRIOR WITHOUT HONOR --
"-- THEN WHAT ARE YOU?"
YOU SURE?
PRETTY SURE.

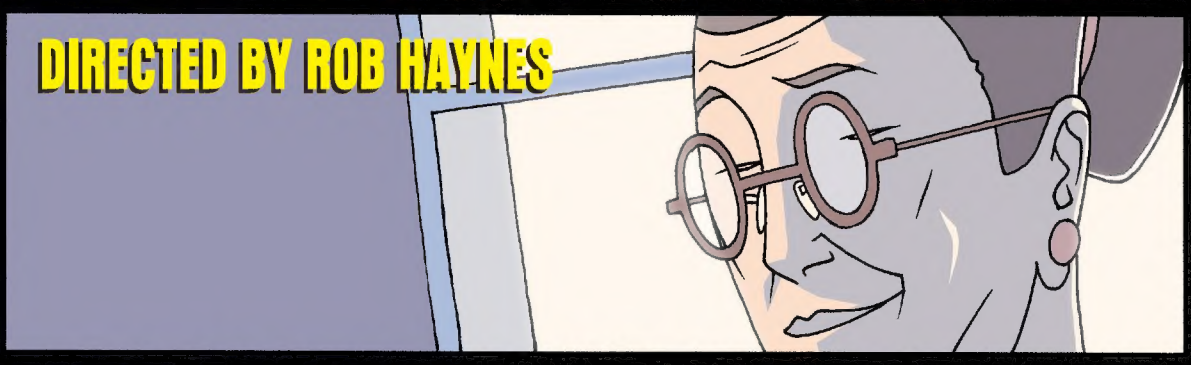

NEVER SAW THEM AGAIN.
NEVER HEARD FROM THEM -- NEVER SAW THEM.
CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT?
THEY USED ME.
USED ME TO FIGHT THEIR FIGHT FOR THEM.
USED ME AS TO MAKE THEIR RETREAT.
USED ME BLUE.
GOD, I REALLY HATE THEM.
THE COUPLE MEMBERS OF THE HAND THEY DID ARREST WEREN'T TALKING -- THEY'LL DEPORT THEM.
THE AIRPORT KEPT IT AS LOW PROFILE AS THEY COULD IN THE MEDIA. I SAW A REPORT THAT BLAMED THE WHOLE THING ON SPIDER-MAN.
POOR KID.
I JUST CAN'T --I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE STONE AND TRAHN NEVER MADE CONTACT WITH ME AGAIN.
NOT A PEEP. NOT A POSTCARD. NOT A FRUIT BASKET. NOTHING.
I KNOW THE GOAL OF ALL THIS IS BIGGER THAN MY PRECIOUS LITTLE EGO. I KNOW THAT.
AND I'M SURE IN THEIR HEADS THEY THINK THAT WHATEVER THEY ARE DOING WITHOUT ME IS BEST DONE WITHOUT ME.
BUT -- BUT WOULD IT HAVE KILLED THEM TO LET ME SEE IT ALL THE WAY THROUGH?
WOULD IT HAVE KILLED THEM TO GIVE ME SOME CLOSURE ON THIS?
IF THERE IS "A NEXT ONE"? IF MY MASTER IS ALIVE -- WILL THEY FIND HIM?
I HATE THIS NINJA CRAP.


STAN LEE PRESENTED
DAREDEVIL
NINJAS
THIS IS BY FAR THE BEST PART OF MY JOB.
I'M SURE.
DEAD END
SOME OF THESE POOR CHILDREN -- THEY COME INTO THE WORLD UNDER SUCH STRESSFUL CIRCUMSTANCES -- BY NO FAULT OF THEIR OWN, OF COURSE.
JUST BABIES.
AND -- AND YOU JUST WANT TO GIVE THEM A FRESH START IN LIFE.
WELL YES, OF COURSE.
A MARVEL FILMS PRODUCTION
WELL, THIS LITTLE ONE, WE HAD A FAMILY ALL LINED UP FOR HER A COUPLE MONTHS AGO --
-- THEY WENT THROUGH THE WHOLE PROCESS AND THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN... THEY BACK OUT.
NOT A WORD.
THAT'S TERRIBLE. BUT STILL -- FOR US...
THIS IS SO EXCITING.
TITLES BY COMICRAFT
HERE SHE IS.
OH MY...
SHE HAS A LITTLE FIRE IN HER EYE. YOU CAN SEE IT.
SHE'S GOING TO BE A PISTOL... THIS ONE.
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY DAVID SELF

YES...
PRODUCED BY QUESADA/DAKESIAN/MOORE/LAMY


WRITTEN BY
BRIAN MICHAEL
BENDIS
BEST PART OF MY JOB.
YOU HEAR THAT, LITTLE KAREN?
LOOKS LIKE YOU FINALLY FOUND A HOME.


SHE'S THE ONE.


DIRECTED BY ROB HAYNES

KAREN.
THE END